

# Wrangel's Defeat Sheds Light on Trotzky's 'Labor Army'

Military Coup Gives New Significance to Red War Lord's Pilgrimage Where Forces Were Raised to Crush White Army

IN the following article Capt. Francis McCullagh, writing from first hand facts, sets forth most vividly the manner in which Leon Trotzky, the Red Minister of War, personally sowed the seeds of Bolshevism in the territory where Gen. Wrangel's White army, as the events proved, was to meet crushing defeat. Capt. McCullagh's narrative is not only a trained observer's intensely interesting description of work, made timely by the recent defeat of Gen. Wrangel's forces, but it brings out in full the significance of Trotzky's "Red Labor Army" campaign, which was closely followed not by industrial advancement but by a military coup. His account of Trotzky's visit, which transformed Ekaterinburg into a gigantic propaganda hall, gives a new and astounding idea of what Red propaganda really means and shows again that chaos and misery ever go hand in hand with Communism.

By CAPT. FRANCIS MCCULLAGH.  
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**T**ROTZKY, the leader of the Red army, visited Ekaterinburg while I was there in order, as his purpose was given, to turn two or three of his armies into Red labor armies and to make his soldiers, in sight of all the world, bear their swords into ploughshares.

The last occasion on which he had visited the town he was a political prisoner, and he had gained it through the iron bars of a prison van. The foreign newspaper correspondents in Petrograd had indulged at that time in some wild prophesies, but none of those correspondents was mad enough to prophesy that a time would come when this Jewish convict would visit, as commander-in-chief of all the Russian armies, a Siberian town in which, after serving a long term of imprisonment as a political suspect, the Czar himself had met a violent death.

Ekaterinburg was gayly decorated in honor of Trotzky's visit, but the Bolshevist Minister of War came, unostentatiously enough, in the night time and refused to hold any parades, inspections of troops or any other formal functions whatsoever. He is a slight built, very man of medium height, dressed as a private soldier, and without any decoration. He wore a curious cap which has been invented for the higher officers of the Red army. It is of khaki cloth, is cut in the style of the steel helmet worn by the ancient Russian boyars (nobles), and the whole front of it is covered by a huge star, the red star of Bolshevism. His ill-developed calves were exposed in a pair of British army puttees, probably one of the many pairs which he had sent to Kolchak and which had travelled further west—with the nimble legs of deserters inside them.

## Aides Aboard Trotzky's Train Work Like Slaves Under Merciless Driver

He wore no belt and carried no weapon; his face is sallow, Mesopotamian, and distinctly Jewish; his eyes dark and bright; his beard and mustache scanty. His movements are quick and animated, and his capacity for work superhuman. The employees on his train told me that they led a dog's life of it. The typewriting girls were kept working all day and far into the night. His numerous secretaries were glued to their desks all day. His telephonists were speaking into the receivers or taking down telephone messages for twenty hours out of the twenty-four.

Their master had it true, made their work somewhat easier for them by cutting out all the polite phrases with which Russian telephone users under the old regime ushered in a conversation. All superlatives were dropped. His business manners are not only brusque, they are brutal. This brutality may be necessary, however, for he has got an immense amount of work to attend to, and he has to deal with people who, though they are excessively polite—perhaps I should say because they are excessively polite—are as dilatory as well bred Turks.

There can be no denying the fact that in February last Trotzky was a busy man. He published on his train a newspaper, *En Route*, for which he wrote articles every day, and he dictated, besides numerous contributions for the local papers in the towns through which he passed. This, of course, gave him an enormous "pull," especially as no able editor had the nerve to differ from him by a hair's breadth.

Trotzky delivered long public speeches several times a week, and spent at least six hours every day presiding over conferences of commissaries, railway officials, factory men, and even doctors. He had fitted to his train a wireless apparatus which kept him in constant communication with Moscow, and he received daily interminable messages about the eastern front, the southern front, the Polish front, the northwestern and Finnish fronts, as well as copies of all the communications received from the British and other foreign Governments, not to speak of a vast amount of technical material sent by his own War Office.

He employed about a dozen secretaries, a tame editor to run his paper, a number of tame diplomats to look after diplomatic affairs and several decorated Communist officers to deal with purely military matters. He put the fear of Trotzky if not the fear of God into all these subordinates; but they rather gloried than otherwise in their servitude. Most Russians like to serve a relentless master.

## Trotzky Takes Up Great Task Of Transport Reorganization

As if all this work were not enough, Trotzky devoted himself at Ekaterinburg to transport reorganization, a task which would alone absorb the energies of a dozen Sir Eric Geddes, and when Krasin went to England Trotzky calmly took over the Commissariat of Ways of Communication on the ground that as railways played such a great part in military operations he had better take charge of them as well as of the army. All this testifies to Trotzky's audacity and indefatigability, but it also betrays a fatal

lack of organizers in the ranks of the Reds. And, it is almost unnecessary to add, Government work is not well done. Despite the hectic thrill which the presence of the Red army Commissars communicates to every Government department which he enters there is a glut of work which clogs the whole machinery, and there are not enough experts to deal with that work. The offices are in a chaotic state, filled with visitors who cannot be admitted and with incompetent clerks rushing hither and thither. Many of the old bureaucrats are, it is true, dribbling back from Paris with their tails between their legs, but as they are distrustful and are always placed under incompetent Reds, no really good work can be expected of them. There is nothing in the world which a ruling class dislikes so much as being placed on an equality with people whom they had been accustomed to regard with contempt as inferior beings.

The stories told of Trotzky's revels and dissolutions are obvious nonsense. The only dissipation on the Bolshevist way of life allowed himself was a short walk every day in a "beautiful pine grove where I used to walk myself and an hour's hard physical exercise, daily shovelling snow from the railway track. In this physical exercise he made every man, woman and child in his train take part, and the example he thus set, as I think, I have already remarked, the educated Russian has the same contempt for manual labor as the white sabers has in India. Even Mrs. Trotzky, Master Trotzky (as he is called), a young Jewess of twenty or twenty-five, had to shovel snow like the rest, and this exercise for manual work remained even when Trotzky was not looking on.

## Trotzky Makes War on the Louse To Check the Ravages of Typhus

No sooner had he arrived in Ekaterinburg than Trotzky plunged straight into work, and I marvelled at the audacity with which he tackled matters which ought, one would think, to have been left entirely to experts. I shall give one example, the typhus question, for I know something about it, having had, a year earlier, to visit all the typhus hospitals in the Urals to interpret for Col. Clarke, the head of the Canadian medical service, when Sir Alfred Knox had sent to the front with the object of doing something to stop the terrible wastage of men caused by typhus among Kolchak's troops. Dr. Clarke found most of the trouble to be due to the apathy of the Russian doctors, who would do nothing unless they were given unlimited quantities of unapproachable resources, though, as Dr. Clarke told me, until he was hoarse and exhausted and finally caught the disease himself, heat would have served their purpose equally well.

On February 19 Trotzky summoned the D. M. S. listened in ominous calm to his statement that there was no chance of typhus disappearing any case till the middle of April, and then attacked him with a sudden burst of violence which nearly frightened out of his wits.

"I am no doctor," said the Bolshevist warlord, "but I know that typhus is communicable by lice. Now it must be possible to destroy these lice by doing a few things, by a certain degree of heat, which could, if necessary, be produced in some of our public bathhouses. Several of the bathhouses are nearly hot enough for the purpose as it is, and even if the soldiers have not got a chance of clothes they might wash in one part of the bathhouse while their clothes are being disinfected in another part. I am not a believer in this doctrine of fatalism that you preach. I will immediately appoint a committee to investigate this question, and if I find that you do not at once take some steps in the matter I will hand you over to the Extraordinary Commission. Good day."

Next day an excellent bathhouse was opened free at the railway station, and I myself enjoyed the first bath that I had had for three months. The committee was never-the-less appointed, and it published everything, even details of hospital mismanagement that were enough to make one's hair stand on end for the Bolshevists, when it suits their purpose, allow the fullest liberty to the press.

The great propaganda engine which had raised the Red Army and smashed Kolchak and Denikin was then turned into the louse, and all Ekaterinburg was soon plastered with posters preaching cleanliness and disinfection.

## Powerful Engine of Propaganda Serves More Sinister Purposes

The same all-powerful engine of propaganda is employed for other purposes—to teach Communism, to enlist support for the Red army, to foster a hatred of England, to excite a craze for education and to produce a contempt for priests and Christianity.

On the day after his arrival Trotzky addressed a large Communist meeting, and here I might remark that no such thing as a public meeting in our sense of the word is ever held in Red Russia. The Bolshevist leaders only address meetings which have been carefully packed with their supporters, and I know of only one case in which it was announced beforehand that they were going to speak. It is impossible for any one who is not a Bolshevist to find out when Lenin is going to speak in Moscow, the reason being simply fear of assassination, and it is next to impossible for a non-Bolshevist to hear him. Trotzky, who is a consummate orator, made a very able speech, of which the keynote was briefly this: "We have defeated Kolchak, but a much more serious enemy remains, namely, the ruined economic system of the country. To put that right we must work harder than men ever worked before since history began. Eighty per cent. of our railway locomotives are out of action, and if they continue break-

Miss Yurovsky, the belle of Ekaterinburg and a leader in one of the Bolshevist anti-Christian societies, lives within plain sight of the house where her father murdered the ex-Czar and his family.



**T**HE young woman pictured here is Miss Yurovsky, daughter of Yankel Yurovsky, the man who murdered the ex-Czar and his family. She is the belle of Ekaterinburg and is engaged to marry (it not already wedded to) Sosnovsky, the chief figure of the "Workers and Soldiers' Deputies" of Ekaterinburg, all of whom signed the death warrant executed by Yurovsky. Capt. McCullagh, who interviewed Yurovsky, gives a description of her as being "a very handsome girl, also of strongly Jewish type and about seventeen years old, came into the room. She was Yurovsky's daughter. She is dead of the League of Communist Youth, a sort of inversion of the Y. M. C. A., which the Bolshevists have established all over Russia with the idea of bringing up the rising generation in strict Socialist and anti-Christian principles."

ing down at the same rate we shall have 99 per cent. out of action within three months, which means a total breakdown of our transport system, and therefore of our system of government. These engines must be repaired. The men who repair them must have food and fuel. The railway lines must be cleared of snow. Wood must be cut and brought to the railways. The Urals factories must be started. This means that all must work, work, work."

He certainly painted a picture gloomy enough to warm the heart of any Winston Churchill, but he did it with a purpose. He wanted to alarm his followers thoroughly and to make them see that the economic situation was extremely serious. He did not go so far, however, as to make them despair, and I afterward discovered that he deliberately understated the actual extent of the economic breakdown and omitted altogether to touch on many very disquieting features.

He ended on a note of robust confidence and caused a sensation by announcing in conclusion that six hundred million rubles in gold had been captured with Kolchak, although he must have known that the amount was only three hundred million. This news, the way, had been carefully withheld from the public until the head of the Red army could use it, as he did, in an effective peroration.

## Red Leader's Appeal Resonates Over the Whole Ural District

I was surprised at the rapidity with which this speech was by previous arrangement, echoed and reechoed all over the country. "The Right Against Economic Ruin" became a catchword like "Wait and See" or "We want eight and we won't wait," or any of the other famous catch phrases of British politics. It became a stereotyped newspaper headline. It stared at one from placards on all the walls. To judge from the reports in the press, it was repeated by every village orator throughout the Urals. At a meeting of the Ekaterinburg Soviet which I attended it was the principal subject of discussion, and at a meeting of the Communist League of Youth, which Trotzky attended, Miss Yurovsky, daughter of the Czar's murderer and president of that league, delivered a speech on the same lines. Trotzky must have smiled his Mephistophelian smile when he heard all this parrot outcry, most of it almost a repetition of what he had said himself.

Trotzky's treatment of the working classes was marked not only by an absence of flattery but even by an autocratic touch which one would never have expected. Finding on his way from Moscow to Ekaterinburg that the workers in a certain Ural factory were not working hard enough he had fifteen of the worst "slackers" arrested and placed on their trial before a workers' tribunal in Ekaterinburg.

On one point on the line his train was stopped by snow, whereupon he had the whole of the local Soviet taken into custody for disobedience to the order for removing snow from the track. They also were tried before a jury of their peers; and, while the case was still *sub judice*, Trotzky wrote, over his own name in the newspapers, a ferocious onslaught on the accused, whose condemnation was thus made certain. He did not say anything about their delaying him, but he inveighed against them for delaying "the trains which brought bread to the women and children of Moscow and to

## Transformation of Town Where Czar Was Slain Into Huge Propaganda Hall Reveals Soviet's Inner Workings

could do so to-morrow if he liked, for he has the Red army with him, and his War Office in Moscow is a fortress bristling with machine guns and filled with troops who are devoted to him.

I had lived in Ekaterinburg previously to the occasion of Trotzky's visit, first in 1915 when the Czechs were there, and again in 1919 when Kolchak's troops and a battalion of the Hampshire Regiment occupied it. On both these occasions it had been a very busy place, the railway station being blocked by staff trains, most of which might be briefly described as *bordels ensembles*. The station platform, a local Piccadilly in more senses than one, being always crowded with officers and ladies, the streets filled with soldiers, horses, cabs and the speeding motor-cars of great Generals; the shops and eating houses full of food, the market place thronged with farmers' carts. In fact it was like any other army base, a town of good cheer, overcrowding, khaki, "hustle," horses and sin. Bolshevism, imperfect, with streaks of religion and bursts of philanthropy, it was, with all its faults, human.

## Trotzky Transforms Ekaterinburg Into Fantastic Propaganda Centre

The Ekaterinburg that met my eyes on this visit was completely changed. Trying to describe that change to myself in one word I meant to say "Bolshevism," but found myself saying "Puritanism." For between the two there are the most astonishing resemblances, perhaps because extremes meet, perhaps because the one is as pre-Christian as the other is post-Christian. I know that it ought not to be so and that Lenin should be seated on a heap of skulls quaffing human blood, while Trotzky should be garaged nightly in a sackcloth and ashes, but, as a matter of fact, Lenin leads as austere a life as Oliver Cromwell while Trotzky is as busy as Lloyd George.

The platform of Ekaterinburg station was no longer a promenade, and only people who had business to do came there. It was sometimes deserted altogether save for three grim and watery figures thirty paces apart. Trotzky's janitories. One great hall in the station had been turned into a typhus hospital and another great hall into a "propaganda point." The station walls were covered with advertisements for newspapers, pamphlets of the nerve tablets and hair tonics order, but Bolshevist propaganda advertisements.

At each end of the platform was painted a huge notice ordering all O. C.'s to bring their men without fail to the "propaganda point" and to apply to the foreman of the "League of Communist Youth" for newspapers and "literature," which would be given free. These propaganda points exist in every station along the Siberian line and are very remarkable institutions. The largest hall in the station building is always selected and is generally presided over by a C. S. Red soldier, who has a tiny office apart. Seated there on a collection of Bolshevist newspapers he wrestles in his spare moments with the voluminous volumes of Karl Marx, indicates to the young the damnable and perilous heresies of Krautsky, or engages in edifying conversation about Lenin's latest encyclical with some merrily old Communist from the local Soviet.

## Pictures and Cartoons for Every Phase of Bolshevist Enterprise

Over the entrance of the Ekaterinburg hall there was painted in large letters the text: "Those who work not, neither shall they eat," while inside one saw on every wall the well known appeal of Karl Marx, "Workers of the world unite! You have a world to gain and only your chains to lose!" The pictures and cartoons with which the whole interior was covered from floor to ceiling might be divided into several groups. 1. Those praising the Red army and calculated to foster a military spirit. 2. Those condemning capitalists, priests and militarists. 3. Those flattering the workman and promising him the overlordship of the world. 4. Those exciting anger against foreign countries, particularly France and England. There were appeals to the railway workmen not to go on strike, but to remember that by striking they would inflict a deadly blow on democracy, and that though their present discomforts were great there was a good time coming.

There were charts showing the parts of machine guns and the way to make bombs, and these were generally accompanied by explanatory letter press and by appeals to the workmen to drill and arm and study the mechanism of their rifles, so that no power on earth could disarm them and force them back again into the old servitude.

Side by side with these were charts explaining the construction of the latest agricultural machinery and exhorting the workmen to make themselves proficient agriculturists. The attacks on religion consisted of caricatures showing monks and priests making money out of holy relics and squandering that money privately on revels and debauchery. The priest was sometimes represented as a huge leering spider weaving his web around the muzhik and his wife and children; and these anti-clerical cartoons were generally accompanied by satirical doggerel from the pen of the Soviet's principal poet, a Moscow Communist who writes a great deal of coarse, satirical verse under the pen name of Ivan Bodny (Poor John).

Many huge colored cartoons were devoted to Kolchak and Denikin, and were mostly vulgar but effective. The triumph of the Red Army was exhibited not without a touch of irony in a series of cartoons, some showing the Red soldiers winding through frozen steppes, others showing them charging madly through the smoke of battle.

## No Public House or Church In the Communists' Picture

In one double picture a number of bloated capitalists, smirking priests and purple nosed Generals were shown in the act of binding the Russian workman in chains. In the other section of the same picture the workman was seen breaking the chains, scattering his would-be masters right and left, and jumping on the stomach of the fattest of them.

The "elimination" of the landlord was represented in a cartoon containing many sections. In the early sections we had the old days of serfdom; in the latter sections we had the landlord running for his life, accompanied by the parish priest, and

finally a prosperous and contented peasantry owning everything in sight and provided with a palatial and well attended Communist school, but with no public house or church in the village.

Some posters dealt with British rule in India and others with the situation in Ireland. The Bolshevist expert on Irish affairs was a comrade Korbentsev, who was in Ireland during the Easter Rebellion and has published a number of pamphlets on "The Irish Revolution" and the Irish question generally. Being an able journalist and head of the Rosta (Russian Socialist Telegraph Agency), he makes great capital out of the present state of things in Ireland.

A almost religious tone was lent to this Propaganda Hall by the pictures relating to Karl Marx. One showed a sinking ship in which all humanity was perishing save only one man, who was standing on a raft in the form of an open book, across which was written the name "Karl Marx." There were also numerous busts of Karl Marx, some in pairs, in long hair and beard, but the most prominent object was the red star of Bolshevism, a huge construction of red glass with a light inside, fixed high up near the ceiling and throwing a baleful light on the great crowd always gathered underneath in the evenings.

These crowds attended the service of song and "instruction" which went on daily from about 5 o'clock to midnight, and which was certainly very popular, for I never found it possible to get anything but standing room. The best local singers and other great composers, as well as good musicians from Russia, performed gratis on a platform at the end of the room where there was a piano and an orchestra. Not only were revolutionary songs given; classical songs by Pushkin and Lermontov were also heard, as well as music by Tchaikovsky and other great composers. Recitations, lectures on art, education, socialism, typhus, and every conceivable subject lent variety to the entertainment.

## Slogan of Bolshevism Shrieks From Every Post and Pillar

I have already alluded to the decorations in honor of Trotzky's arrival. These took the form of Red flags and stars of many triumphal arches, of many pictures of Lenin and Trotzky on the walls, and of all sorts of bunting, evergreens, transparencies and colored cloth on all the house fronts.

Everywhere, in gigantic letters, the war cry of Bolshevism shrieked at the ears of the "World United." If anything ever becomes true by constant repetition, this union must soon take place, for it is a stereotyped heading on every issue of every newspaper, it appears in all the headlines of every newspaper, it appears on all the printed notices of the Government stationery, and Bolshevist mothers paste it over their child's cradle as an American mother pastes "God Bless Our Home."

The former British Consulate, which had been converted into a Soviet Government office had broken out into a perfect eruption of decorations with a picture of Lenin, framed in a wreath of evergreens, as the centre of the scheme. The French Consulate next door, which had been converted into a Court of Justice, was similarly decorated and carried a picture of Trotzky. Peter the Great had been knocked off his pedestal in the centre of the town, and his place had been taken by a large marble head of Karl Marx. Catherine the Great had also been deposed. In front of the Cathedral was a great pyramidal erection of wood covered with red cloth, bearing the inscription "Labor." It was adorned with brass plaques representing half-naked figures toiling in mines, forges and factories, these figures being so well designed that I suspect the plaques must have been taken from some museum.

## House Where Czar Was Murdered Becomes a Political Headquarters

The house where the Czar was murdered was converted into an office of the Political Department and bore a great painting representing the Red army charging through smoke and snow. The square in front of this house had been called "Resurrection Place" but that name had been changed to "The Square of National Vengeance," which shows that the Bolshevists, who ought to know, entertain none of those doubts about the murder of the Czar which some people in this country still harbor.

The street that runs north and south of that square is named after Liebknecht street, and the other principal street, in the municipal theatre is situated, is called Lenin street. All the remaining streets and squares have also had their names changed. Formerly there were few Government institutions and no clubs in Ekaterinburg, but now there are everywhere, consisting of nothing else. Instead of promoting business, however, this multiplication of Government offices has killed it. The dead hand of Government control has stifled every kind of enterprise.

The town had many Communist eating houses, but they were only for Communists. And a disagreeable workhouse appearance they all had. Exactly the same in every respect save that some bore the sign "Soviet Government Eating House For Adults," and others the sign "Soviet Government Eating House For Children." The children, by the way, are well fed in both Ekaterinburg and in Moscow, but this is all part of a large and cunning scheme to get them from their mothers and make them regard themselves as children of the State and not bound by ties of peculiar affection for any man and woman.

Repelled by the blank, barracklike exterior of the Soviet feeding troughs, I tried to buy food elsewhere, but I found it utterly impossible.

It was not that the Red army had eaten up everything or that all the food had been sent to European Russia, for no food had been sent across the Urals since the Bolsheviks came to that town, which lies close to one of the richest agricultural districts in the world; and, though there had been a White army in Ekaterinburg when I was there last, the civilians could nevertheless get plenty of food. The reason for this stoppage lies in the Socialist theory that the State should feed everybody and that there should be no private restaurants, no shops, and no middle class at all. This kills all private enterprise as surely as a tree is killed by the cutting away of its roots.